



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EST (NOAA)

Agricultural Weather Highlights - Monday - April 14, 2003

- ***In the West***, late-season storminess is providing some drought relief in the ***Great Basin***, but slowing spring fieldwork across ***California*** and the ***Northwest***.
- ***On the Plains***, a few showers are overspreading ***Montana***, but very warm, dry weather elsewhere is reducing soil moisture for winter wheat development and recently planted summer crops. Today's high temperatures are forecast to approach 90 degrees F as far north as ***Nebraska***. Long-term drought and subsoil moisture shortages remain a concern on the ***northern and central Plains***, while topsoil moisture is diminishing across ***Oklahoma*** and ***northern Texas***.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, very warm, dry weather favors initial corn planting across ***southernmost portions of the region*** and pre-planting fieldwork elsewhere. Although dry ***Midwestern*** soils are conducive to fieldwork, newly planted crops will need regular rainfall in coming weeks to prevent drought stress.
- ***In the South***, warmer weather is promoting an acceleration of spring planting from the ***Delta eastward***, where last week's heavy rainfall had caused local flooding and curtailed fieldwork for several days.

Outlook: A large area of high pressure will maintain warm, dry conditions in the ***Midwestern, Northeastern, and Mid-Atlantic States*** through mid-week, while scattered showers will accompany an increase in humidity across the ***Southeast***. Farther west, unsettled weather will prevail from the ***Pacific Coast eastward to the Rockies*** due to the arrival of a series of eastern Pacific disturbances. Meanwhile, a developing storm system will bring widespread, early-week rainfall to the ***central Plains and western Corn Belt***, and mid-week showers to the ***Ohio Valley and Great Lakes States***. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for April 19-23 calls for above-normal precipitation in most areas from the ***Rockies eastward to the Atlantic Coast***, but drier-than-normal weather in the ***Pacific Coast States***. Above-normal temperatures are likely across the ***eastern half of the U.S.***, while the ***western half of the nation*** will experience cooler-than-normal weather.

Contact: Brad Rippey, Agricultural Meteorologist, USDA/OCE/WAOB, Washington, D.C. (202-720-2397)